

UNC Research Study Opportunity! Can a mindfulness program help you cope with anxiety, worry and stress?

The UNC School of Medicine and UNC Health are dedicated to providing the very best care available for our patients; we are always learning more about the topics that are important to you to bring you the most current information. Research is one way that we do that. As a patient, researchers will occasionally contact you to tell you about a new study, as below.

**Research Opportunity:** The SMILE Research Study: Can a mindfulness program help you cope with anxiety, worry and stress?

**Why?** Many people struggle with ways to feel more relaxed or calm when they are stressed or worried about everyday issues. Every day stressors can range from healthcare to finances to providing family necessities. Some people feel helpless or like they are not in control of their own thoughts and body responses (such as feeling jittery and anxious, or feeling tired and sad). It may be difficult to seek help or care due to work/family schedules, childcare arrangements, transportation or money.

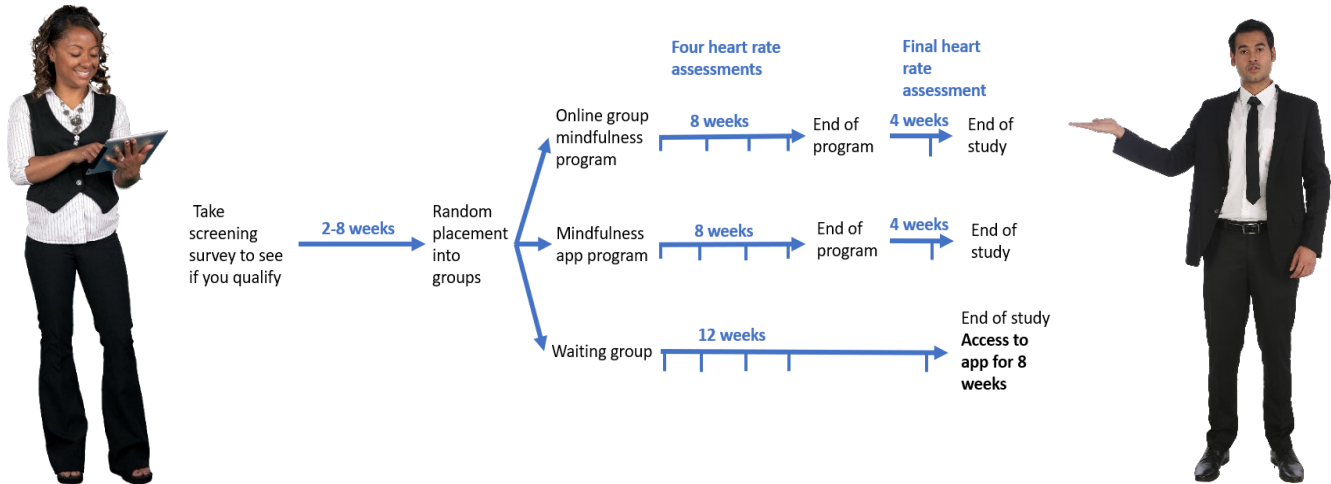
**How?** In the SMILE Research Study, our goal is to see whether a home-based training program can help you feel better when you encounter those times of stress and worry. The home-based training program we are using is called mindfulness. Mindfulness involves training our minds to pay attention to what is happening right here and now, and letting go of worries about the past or future that can cause us distress.



We will be testing 2 similar programs, one that is taught in an online group and one that is taught through a series of slides and video presentations. Both of the programs are specifically geared towards adults who are African American, Black, Hispanic and/or Latino(a/e/x). We are looking for volunteers to test the effects of these programs on mental and physical health and provide valuable feedback by completing 6 research sessions (questionnaires and recording heart rate using a simple monitor), before, during and after receiving the training program. All parts of the research, including the mindfulness program and research sessions, will take place in your home, via a

computer tablet and heart monitor that will be shipped to you. Instructions and training videos will be provided to you on the tablet. The training program will be provided to you for free. After you complete each research session, you will receive \$20 for a total of up to \$120 compensation.

The researchers will randomly decide which version of the mindfulness program you will receive (or whether you will be placed in a waiting group). Once you are placed into a group (which may take up to 2 months after you sign up for the study), your participation in the study will last 3 months. If you are placed in the waiting group, you will still be compensated for completing each research session, but you will not be able to complete the mindfulness training until after 3 months.



**Do I qualify?** Please consider helping us learn more about how individuals respond to online programs and our ability to test these programs from the comfort and convenience of your home. Once again, compensation is provided for your time and effort and you will receive the training program for free. Participation in the research is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time. To qualify, you must 18 years or older and identify as Black, African American, Hispanic, or Latino. You may not qualify if you have a history of heart disease, stroke, or epilepsy because those conditions may affect your heart rate and our ability to tell if the mindfulness program is helping you. Certain medications may interfere also, including medications for chronic pain and mental health conditions. Additional eligibility criteria will be assessed in a screening questionnaire which is linked below.

**How do I get involved?** To learn more and see if you or someone you know is a good fit, the first step is to visit <https://redcap.link/4p51snf3> or scan the QR code in the lower right hand corner of this letter (use the camera setting on your phone to zoom in on the code, and you will be directed to the eligibility screener). You may also contact us directly at 919-323-1803 or [smile\\_study@med.unc.edu](mailto:smile_study@med.unc.edu). If you respond to us by email, please do not include any of your medical information in your email as your response may not be sent securely; but we are happy to discuss all important details over the phone.

If you or a family member is curious to learn about other research opportunities here at UNC and UNC Health, please visit [ResearchForMe.unc.edu](https://ResearchForMe.unc.edu). Every person in every study makes a difference; it is thanks to participants like you that we are able to keep learning and discovering!

Thank you,

*Susan A. Gaylord*

Susan A. Gaylord, PhD  
Director, Program on Integrative Medicine

